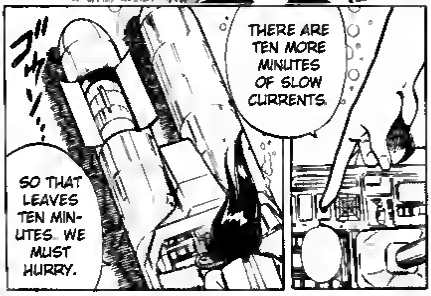
IT TOOK ALL NIGHT TO GO OVER THE CAT'S CRUISER THAT WE SEIZED.
YAWN
DANG, ANOTHER ALL-NIGHTER..
THE SNEERING GODDESS
WHAT A WASTE OF TIME.
I THOUGHT WE'D FIND SOMETHING IN THAT CRUISER.
AND IT WAS EVEN REPORTED AS STOLEN...
SIGH
WH-WHAT!?
UH...
AFTER BAILING ON GIVING HER THE RING, NOW I'VE STAYED OUT ALL NIGHT
AND NOW I GUESS HITOMI WILL BE MAD
TOSH, ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, SHE BAILED ON YOU!
WE ARE TERRIBLY SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE, BUT CAT'S EYE IS TEMPORARILY CLOSED
SWEAT
J-JUST LIKE YESTERDAY...!!
COFFEE HOUSE

POOR MR. TOSHIO HAS TO WORK IN VAIN!!
MR. NAGAISHI MADE THE PREPARATIONS. ABOUT NOW THE CRUISER SHOULD BE REPORTED AS STOLEN.
THE SNEERING GODDESS

IT'LL WORK OUT!! WE'LL BE BACK TODAY!!
BUT DO YOU THINK IT'S OKAY? KEEPING IT A SECRET FROM TOSHIO THAT WE WOULD BE LEAVING THE HOUSE...
WE HAD TO THINK ABOUT IT A WHILE.
REALLY. THOUGH GIVEN WE COULD ONLY ACCESS THE SUNKEN SHIP FOR TWENTY MINUTES,
I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE'S SUCH AN EASY WAY TO PULL UP APHRODITE.
RIGHT!! TODAY! SOMETIMES THE ANSWER IS STARING YOU IN THE FACE.
THERE IT IS.
LOOK!
WHY HAS NO ONE THOUGHT OF IT BEFORE? WAY TO GO AI!
HEH HEH... I'M YOUNG SO MY MIND IS STILL FLEXIBLE.
IF WE CUT FREE THE FIGUREHEAD APHRODITE FROM THE MAIN BODY OF THE SHIP
AND ATTACH A FLOTATION TANK,
THE APHRODITE WILL FLOAT TO THE SURFACE EASILY.
IT'S POSSIBLE WITHIN THE SHORT INTERVAL OF SLOWER CURRENTS!!

WE'LL HAVE YOU UP TOP IN NO TIME, APHRO-CHAN.


THERE ARE TEN MORE MINUTES OF SLOW CURRENTS.
SO THAT LEAVES TEN MIN-UTES. WE MUST HURRY.

AI, FIRST ATTACH THIS FLOTATION TANK TO APHRODITE!!
ROGER!

THESE ROPES ARE KINDA IN THE WAY
HUH?

.....
AH...AI!! WHAT HAP-PENED !?
GYA HH-HH !!
AWAH AWAH AHHH
ズ"
BUT THIS CORPSE IS FRESH... AND...
NO...THIS VESSEL SANK AT LEAST FORTY YEARS AGO.
...IS IT ONE OF THE CREW WHO FAILED TO ESCAPE...?

HAS THE SYNDICATE GOT WIND OF THIS ALREADY !?

.....
THEN... SOME ONE ELSE KNOWS ABOUT THE SUNKEN SHIP...

THAT'S... A WET SUIT IT'S WEARING!!

NO. APHRODITE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S LAUGHING AT THOSE CORPSES AROUND HER.

COULD BE... ANYWAY, GET RID OF THE CORPSES AND CONTINUE WITH THE MISSION!

WHY IS APHRODITE STILL HERE? THOSE GUYS SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO THINK OF THIS PLAN.
SIS, IF THE CORPSES CAME FROM THE SYNDICATE,

I GUESS... THERE AREN'T ANY MORE CORPSES, HUH.

THAT'S ENOUGH, AI. WE ONLY HAVE FIVE MINUTES LEFT.
O-OKAY.

WELL, ONCE THEY LOOKED LIKE THAT THEY WEREN'T GOING TO BE RAISING ANYTHING, RIGHT?
WELL, APHRO-SAMA, I HOPE YOU WON'T MIND IF I PUT MY HANDS ON YOU!
THE QUESTION IS, HOW DID THEY COME TO LOOK LIKE THAT!!
HYEE !!
AI!! GET BACK!
HYEEE! APHRO-DITE IS PISSED!!
!?

003
000
WH- WHAT'S THAT?
A- AI!! ARE YOU AL- RIGHT !?
OWO WWW
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE !!
HYEE
N- NO WAY!!
011
IT'S A
...
A T- TIME BOMB !!
025

...WAIT, HITOMI!!
...HUH? DID IT STOP WHEN WE MOVED AWAY!?
045
000
000
BUT IF YOU GET NEAR IT AGAIN, IT MAY BLOW UP IMMEDIATELY!! THAT SOUND IS A WARNING!!
MAYBE IT STOPS FOR A PERIOD AFTER PEOPLE MOVE AWAY!
AI, CALM DOWN!! IT'S JUST A STATUE!!
AND WHEN I TOUCHED HER BEFORE, SHE LOOKED RIGHT AT ME...
L- LET'S SCRAM!! APHRODITE IS LOOKING RIGHT AT US!!

AND MAYBE THE REASON THOSE GUYS ENDED UP LIKE THAT!!
EH?
NOW I GET IT. THIS IS THE REASON THE SYNDICATE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO TAKE APHRODITE...
A S-SHARK !!
A SHARK!! HURRY!! WE'VE GOTTA GET TO THE UNDERWATER SCOOTER!!
R-RIGHT.

AHH! THE SCOOTER !!
ガシュ～ン
NO WAY!! WHEN... DID THAT ...
...PROBABLY THE SOUND ATTRACTED THEM!!
HYEE
THE SOUND !?
DUE TO THE STRANGE PREVAILING CURRENTS AROUND HERE, THE FOOD FOR THESE SHARKS MUST BE SCARCE.
THEIR FOOD... IS THE HUMANS AIMING FOR APHRODITE!!
THE SYNDICATE HAS PROBABLY TRIED FOR APHRODITE ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS!!
THE SHARKS KNOW THE SOUND MEANS THERE ARE PEOPLE HERE, AND THAT'S WHY THEY CONGREGATE!!

THEY GUARD APHRODITE AND PROTECT HER FROM THE TOUCH OF HUMAN HANDS!!
THEN, THE SHARKS ARE THE REASON FOR THOSE CORPSES!!
THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT COMMENTARY NOW. WE'VE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!
KYA-HH!!
AI!! INFLATE THE FLOTATION TANK!
!!
BEEP
KYAH !!

WE HAVE TO GET TO THE SURFACE RIGHT AWAY!
THE GUARDS ARE EXPECTING US TO RUSH UP.
!!
SIS, LOOK! THE CURRENTS ARE PICKING BACK UP!!
PHEW
WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO WAIT UNTIL THE CURRENTS BECOME MORE VIOLENT.
BUT WHAT DO WE DO? IF WE GET CAUGHT UP IN THE BOTTOM CURRENTS, WE'RE DOOMED!!
THEY KNOW, AND THEY ARE GATHERING THERE!!
NO WAY!!

WE'LL GO WITH THE FLOW!!
THEN?
THE SHARKS AREN'T STUPID THEY'LL LEAVE BEFORE THE CURRENTS GET TOO BAD AND THEN..
..THERE'S NO OTHER WAY OUT.
EEE !?
LOOK! THE SHARKS ARE BECOMING AGITATED
SO THAT WE DON'T LET GO!!
EVERY-ONE HOLD HANDS !!
H-HERE IT IS!!

AHH !!
KYA-HHH!!
APHRODITE... IS LAUGHING!
DON'T LET GO!! THE CURRENT IS EVEN STRONGER THAN I IMAGINED ...!!

PROTECTED BY HER NATURAL GUARDIANS, SHE CONTINUES TO SNEER AT ALL OF THEM.
SHE HAS WATCHED SO MANY FOOLS THAT WOULD CHALLENGE HER..."
AHHH HH!!
HITOMI
...AI!!
ARE YOU CONSCIOUS !?
...WHERE ARE WE?
WE'RE SAVED!!
HITOMI !!

HUH!?
PROBABLY THE SAME FORCES THAT BROUGHT US SWEPT IT HERE WHEN THE SHIP SANK
THE CURRENTS SEEM TO QUIETEN DOWN AT THIS ROCK LEDGE. WE WERE ALL THREE SWEPT IN SEPARATELY.
.....
LOOK. THIS STUFF SEEMS LIKE IT WAS SWEPT FROM THE WRECK AS WELL...
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA FOR ALL ETERNITY, SHE ONLY SNEERS.
COULD APHRODITE REALLY BE SMILING AT ANYONE?
BORNE FROM URANUS, THE GOD OF THE SKY, APHRODITE...*
"BROUGHT TO ZEPYRUS AND THE HORAI GODDESSES..
COULD THIS BE FROM THE SHIP AS WELL?
SIS
HMM... THERE'S SOME LETTERING CARVED HERE.
APHRODITE
"APHRODITE"... IT MUST BE A NAME PLATE!!
!!
"AROSE FROM SEA FOAM," HUH. IT'S APHRODITE'S BIRTH LEGEND FROM GREEK MYTHOLOGY.

IN THE OLD DAYS FATHER TOLD ME THIS STORY OFTEN.. AND HE ALSO BASED THREE PAINTINGS ON IT...
REALLY, SIS!?
LET ME LOOK AT THAT!!
HEINZ!! FATHER CARVED THIS!!
EH!!
APHRODITE
IT APPEARS THAT THE HINT FOR RAISING APHRODITE LIES NOT IN THIS OCEAN BUT BACK ON LAND!!
WITH THIS, APHRODITE IS SNEERING AT US!!

CAT'S EYE

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